



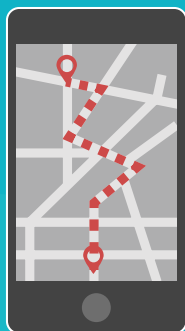
UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Pathways to Impact

Impact can be broadly defined as the contribution that research makes to society and the economy

We have developed this tool to help you plan your approach to creating impact from your research. The tool can be used to help write a Pathways to Impact plan for an RCUK grant, or for more general impact planning.





What drives you?

Know where to go

First take some time to reflect on what you personally want to achieve through your research. Are you motivated to bring about change in the world, and what could that change look like? Aligning your personal motivations with your pathways to impact will give you the best chance of success.

Research has diverse and sometimes surprising impacts. Reading about other researchers' stories from our library of case studies to fire up your imagination.



Get inspiration



Start early and be prepared

Understanding the requirements

It's best to consider impact as an integral part of your research plans right from the start. If you are applying for a research grant, consult the funder's guidance for their specific requirements.

You can also use our template as a guide to what to include in your RCUK Pathways to Impact, or other impact plan, as you work through the rest of this tool. Consider the broader and longer term impact of the potential research outcomes beyond the academic community. What social impacts could arise from your findings? What groups, organisations or individuals may be able to apply your research in practice?



RCUK guidance



Impact planning template



Seek advice and support

from people who have done it before.

Whatever the potential impact of your research, there is a wide range of advice and support available both from the University and also other organisations in and around Cambridge. Use the links below to find out more:

 School and Department Impact Contacts

 Working with industry

 Commercialisation

 Communicating your research toolkit

 Public engagement

 Policy engagement

 Impact training

 Support for Apps and Websites



Invest in strong partnerships

prompt questions and things to consider



Collaborative partnerships can create more impact and value from your research. Choose your partners carefully. Good partners will:

- Understand the value of your research to them;
- Have the people and funds to engage with your research;
- Be open to working with academia

Be prepared to invest time to build mutual understanding. You may have very different motivations and drivers – for example, academia’s quest for discovery versus industry’s desire to solve problems and improve financial performance.



Partnership Working in the
Arts and Humanities:



Sharing the secrets of successful
stakeholder engagement



Resources for engaging with young people



Make your proposal SMART

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic,
Timely

Building SMART objectives into your Pathway to Impact will show that you have a clear understanding of how to engage with your stakeholders and partners, and appropriate plans to carry this out.



SMART prompt questions



SMART examples



SMART definition



Realistic budget

for your impact and engagement activity

Effective engagement with research partners and stakeholders takes time and effort. Applicants for RCUK grants are encouraged to budget for the costs of Pathways to Impact activities including specialist resources and expertise where needed. We have put together a list of possible activities and indicative associated costs. Please note that these are for illustration only and activities should be appropriate for the nature and scale of the research.

 Example budgets



Evidence and evaluate your Impact

Monitor, evaluate and keep evidence of
what you do

Impact evaluation is essential for lesson-learning and accountability. The evaluation plan for your pathway to impact should be timely, effective and appropriate in scale. Choose an approach which enables you to demonstrate whether you have achieved the impact(s) you set out to deliver. The body of evidence you will gather throughout your project will be a useful asset for:

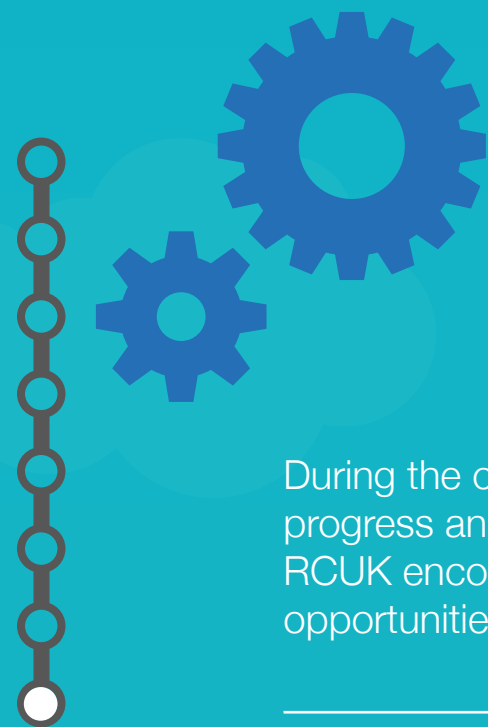
1. informing next steps
2. making a case for future funding
3. submitting your impact to the REF.



Evidencing impact advice from
the University



Collecting Research Evidence
best practice guide



React to opportunities

change gears, be flexible, take risks

During the course of your research project, you should periodically review the progress and effectiveness of your engagement and impact activity. RCUK encourages grant-holders to be flexible, take risks and respond to new opportunities when they arise.



Pathways to Impact

Your Pathways to Impact is now mapped out and you have considered all of the content you need to include and who to consult for advice along the way.

Contact: [email](#) for further advice



Impact planning template



Webpage for Pathway to Impact Guidance